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U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) announced today he plans to introduce legislation that would block potentially billions of dollars in federal stimulus funds from flowing to the office of impeached Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

"I think this is necessary to prevent any temptation to him to provide a parting gift of the billions of dollars that will be made available to the states, including the state of Illinois," Kirk said during a news conference at his Northbrook office. "We want to make sure that federal law denies Gov. Blagojevich any chance to provide funds through his office to any one of his friends of allies."

Under the amendment, stimulus funds would flow instead to the offices of the Illinois legislature for distribution -- a provision allowed under a federal law approved in 1996, the congressman said.

In the event Blagojevich has left office by the time a new economic stimulus bill is enacted, Kirk's amendment would allow the federal money to continue flowing through the governor's office. Kirk, however, said the Illinois Senate's impeachment hearing could last beyond the expected Feb. 12 date that the economic stimulus bill is expected to become law.

"Since there will be no congressional earmarks, I'm worried about providing billions in new federal resources to Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who has already been impeached by the Illinois House and will be on trial" before the Senate, beginning Jan. 26, Kirk said.

The economic stimulus bill could provide funds for projects like the modernization of O'Hare International Airport and other infrastructure projects that have gone through the engineering phase and are ready for construction.

Kirk also said with former U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood (R-Ill.) positioned to be the nation's next

transportation secretary, Illinois should fare well under the stimulus plan.